



CP32 CHILD SAFETY POLICY

CHRISTIAN YOUTH CAMPS

PURPOSE

This purpose of this policy is to outline Christian Youth Camps (CYC) commitment to the safety of children and vulnerable people from all forms of abuse.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all CYC employees, volunteers, contractors, sub-contractors, guests and visitors on all CYC sites, using CYC vehicles or off-site on CYC business.

DEFINITIONS

- **Child-** In Victoria, a child is considered anyone under 18 years of age.
- **Staff, Employee and/or Volunteer** means a single person or group of people performing regular directed work/tasks (paid or unpaid) on behalf of CYC or any of its registered entities.
- **Guest** means any paying or non-paying person legally using any CYC property or registered site to participate in any CYC advertised activity.
- **Child Safety** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm and includes:
 - > The measures we take to keep children safe from child abuse while they are in our care
 - > Providing support to a child who discloses, or is at risk of, child abuse
 - > Responding to suspicions, disclosures and incidents of child abuse
- **Child Abuse** includes the infliction on a child of physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or grooming offences or the serious neglect of a child.
- **Child sexual abuse** is when any person uses their power over a child to involve that child in sexual activity. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity. It may include fondling of the child's genitals (or getting the child to fondle the perpetrator's genitals); masturbation (with the child as either observer or participant); oral sex; vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger, or any other object; fondling of breasts; voyeurism (regular observation of the child) or exhibitionism. It can also include exposing the child to pornography or using the child for the purposes of pornography or prostitution.
- **Reasonable grounds for belief** is a belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has occurred when all known consideration or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- a) The child is in need of protection.
- b) The child has suffered significant harm as a result of physical injury.
- c) The parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

TYPES AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity.

Physical Indicators

- Bruising, bleeding or discharge from the genital or rectal area
- Signs of pain, itching or discomfort in the genital or rectal area
- Presence of sexually transmitted diseases
- Frequent urinary tract infections
- Pregnancy (actual or suspected)
- Self-mutilation

Behavioural Indicators

- Displaying age-inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge
- Promiscuity or inappropriate expressions of affection
- Sudden fear of specific places or particular adults
- Obsessive and compulsive washing
- Complaining of headaches, stomach pains or nausea
- Sleeping difficulties
- Poor self-care or personal hygiene
- Regressive behaviours such as bed-wetting or speech loss
- Substance abuse, self-harm or suicide attempts

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical Abuse is the non-accidental use of physical force against a child that causes, or is likely to cause, harm to the child.

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruises, burns or welts
- Cuts, grazes or scratches
- Ligature or bite marks
- Bald patches or hair missing in tufts
- Multiple injuries of varying age
- Missing or loosened teeth
- Poisoning or medication overdose

Behavioural Indicators

- Inconsistent, vague or unlikely explanations of an injury
- Wariness, fear or distrust of adults
- Avoidance of physical contact
- Disproportionate reactions or limited emotion displayed when hurt or threatened
- Wearing clothing unsuitable for the weather, to hide injuries (eg. long sleeves or long pants)
- Unexplained absences and decline in academic performance
- Substance abuse, self-harm or suicide attempts

GROOMING

Grooming is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child for sexual abuse at a later time.

Indicators of Grooming

- Developing an unusually close connection with an older person
- Using a different language style or copying the way the new 'friend' speaks or talking about a new 'friend' who doesn't belong to his/her normal social circle
- Having jewellery, clothing or expensive items given to them by the 'friend'
- Possessing large amounts of money which he/she cannot account for
- Using a new mobile phone (given by the 'friend') excessively to make calls, videos or send text messages
- Being excessively secretive about their use of communications technology, including social media
- Frequently staying out overnight, especially if the relationship is with an older person
- Being dishonest about where they've been and whom they've been with
- Using drugs
- Assuming a new name – being in possession of a false ID, stolen passport or driver's licence provided by the 'friend' to avoid detection
- Being picked up in a car by the 'friend' from home, school or 'down the street'
- Becoming aggressive, anxious, depressed, hostile, hyperactive, impatient, resentful, secretive or withdrawn

CHILD EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional child abuse is the repeated rejection, isolation or threatening of a child to the extent that the child suffers, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm to their physical or developmental health.

Physical Indicators

- Delays in emotional, mental or physical development
- Speech impairments, such as stuttering or selectively being mute
- Rocking, thumb-sucking or other infantile behaviours
- Eating disorders

Behavioural Indicators

- Exhibiting high anxiety or symptoms of stress
- Poor self-image or low self-esteem
- Displaying aggressive, demanding or attention-seeking behaviour
- Compulsive lying or stealing
- Unexplained mood swings or depression
- Poor social or interpersonal skills
- Excessive neatness or cleanliness
- Substance abuse, self-harm or suicide attempts

EXPOSURE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family violence is the behaviour of a person towards another family member that is physically, sexually, emotionally, psychologically or economically abusive, threatening, controls that family member or causes them to fear for their own safety or that of another person.

A child can be either be a direct victim of this family violence or they may hear, witness or be exposed to the effects of the violence, such as broken crockery or furniture, be aware of another family member's fear, attempt to prevent or minimise the violence, or mediate between the perpetrator and the victim.

Physical Indicators

- Bruises, welts or cuts
- Fractured bones, especially in an infant, for whom a fracture is unlikely to have occurred accidentally
- Poisoning
- Internal injuries
- Speech impairments
- Delays in physical development
- Failure to thrive

Behavioural Indicators

- Violent or aggressive language or behaviour
- Depression, anxiety or suicidal thoughts
- Wariness of adults, nervousness, being withdrawn
- Difficult adjusting to change
- Psychosomatic illness
- Bedwetting and sleeping disorders
- 'Acting out' such as being cruel to animals
- Being extremely demanding or attention-seeking
- Participating in risk-taking to impress peers
- Being overly compliant or shy
- Trying to take care of or protect family members
- Being embarrassed about family
- Fear of parents, carers, guardians or of going home
- Absenteeism from, or late arrival at, school, poor academic outcomes
- Parent-child conflict
- Wearing long sleeves or pants even on hot days, to hide bruises or other injuries
- Being excessively friendly to strangers
- Alcohol or substance abuse

It is very important however to remember that these signs and difficulties visible in some children aren't conclusive that family violence is occurring. Behavioural difficulties like these can come from many other causes. Likewise, for many children there may be different or no signs that they are struggling as a victim.

NEGLECT

Neglect is the failure to provide a child with an adequate standard of nutrition, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision. It can put a child at immediate and serious risk and/or result in long-term, cumulative harm.

It may be committed by a parent, carer, babysitter, teacher or other temporary care-giver.

Physical Indicators

- Poor personal hygiene
- Looking dirty and unwashed
- Lack of adequate or suitable clothing
- Unattended health problems
- Looking pale or weak
- Inadequate shelter or unsanitary living conditions
- Self-comforting behaviours or craving attention

Behavioural Indicators

- Stealing or begging for food
- Aggressive or self-destructive behaviour
- Involvement in criminal activity
- Poor, irregular or non-attendance at school
- Reluctance or refusal to go home
- Limited positive interaction with parents, carers or guardians
- Poor academic performance
- Substance abuse



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CHRISTIAN YOUTH CAMPS

POLICY

- Christian Youth Camps Ltd (CYC) is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children involved in all CYC activities, at all times, while attending our facilities.
- All children regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.
- CYC has zero tolerance for child abuse. Every person working at CYC is responsible for the care and protection of the children within CYC's care and reporting information about alleged child abuse.
- Child safety is a shared responsibility between all employees, workers, contractors, volunteers and members of the CYC community.
- CYC will consider the opinions of children and use their opinions to develop child safety policies and procedures.
- CYC supports and respects all children, employees and volunteers. CYC is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.
- CYC will appoint a Child Safety Officer. The Child Safety Officer is available for anyone to gain advice and support from in relation to child safety.
- CYC's policies and procedures are compliant with the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Commission for Children and Young People Mandatory Reporting Scheme.

CYC CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

Email: people@cyc.org.au

Ph: 5952 2324

Address: 1801 Phillip Island Rd, Cowes 3922

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

RESPONSIBILITIES

CYC BOARD:

The CYC board has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse within CYC and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate effective internal control systems are in place to prevent it. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a P32a Child Safety Code of Conduct are in place.



CYC CEO:

The CEO of CYC is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that all employees, contractors and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures and the P32a Child Safety Code of Conduct.
2. Ensuring that all adults within the CYC community are aware of their obligation to report alleged sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures.
3. Ensuring that all employees, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the P32a Child Safety Code of Conduct.
4. Providing support for employees, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child safety responsibilities.
5. Reporting allegations of abuse by CYC employees/volunteers to the Commission for Children & Young People as per the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

1. Promoting child safety at all times.
2. Supporting and advising all CYC employees and volunteers in undertaking their child safety responsibilities.
3. Ensuring that all child safety policies and procedures are compliant with legislation, regularly reviewed and updated.
4. Supporting and working in conjunction with Site Managers when they receive a Child Abuse Report Form or form a reasonable belief that a child has been abused or is at risk of being abused.
5. Be available for advice and support to Camp Directors, CYC Holiday Camps Coordinator and CYC Ministries Manager in relation to disclosures.
6. Review all Child Abuse Report Forms after each holiday camp season

SITE MANAGERS/CYC MINISTRIES MANAGER/CYC HOLIDAY CAMPS COORDINATOR

Site Managers, CYC Ministries Managers and CYC Holiday Camps Coordinator are responsible for:

1. Promoting child safety at all times
2. Ensuring that all employees, contractors and volunteers are adhering to organisational policies and procedures and the P32a Child Safety Code of Conduct.
3. Assessing the risk of child abuse at their site and minimising any risks where reasonably practicable.
4. Educating and training staff about the prevention and detection of child abuse
5. Reporting allegations and disclosures of abuse to Child Protection Services
6. Notifying the Child Safety Officer and CEO of any allegations and disclosures of abuse as soon as practicable but preferably before Child Protection Services are notified.

****NOTE:** The CYC Ministries Manager and CYC Holiday Camps Coordinator are not required to report allegations and disclosures of abuse to the Child Safety Officer or CEO before notifying Child Protection Services.



CAMP DIRECTORS

Camp Directors are responsible for:

1. Promoting child safety at all times
2. Ensuring that all employees, contractors and volunteers are adhering to organisational policies and procedures and the P32a Child Safety Code of Conduct.
3. Assessing the risk of child abuse at their camp and minimising any risks where reasonably practicable.
4. Reporting allegations and disclosures of abuse to Child Protection Services
5. Notifying the CYC Holiday Camps Coordinator and/or CYC Ministries Manager of any allegations and disclosures of abuse as soon as practicable and preferably before these are reported to Child Protection Services.

EMPLOYEES/VOLUNTEERS

All employees and volunteers share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse and must:

1. Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the P32a Child Safety Code of Conduct and CYC's procedures in relation to child safety, and comply with all requirements.
2. Report any allegation or reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to their Camp Director/Supervisor/Site Manager immediately.
3. Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

RECRUITMENT OF NEW EMPLOYEES/SELECTION OF VOLUNTEERS

CYC undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all employees and volunteers which aim to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of CYC.
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share CYC's values and commitment to protect children.
- Prevent a person from working at CYC if they pose a risk to children.

CYC requires all employees and volunteers to pass through CYC's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing paid or volunteer work with CYC. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Potential employees having an interview with the Site Manager/Head of Department
- Volunteers successfully completing the Volunteer Application Process
- A minimum of 2 x reference checks completed
- Obtaining a Working With Children Check (with the exception of CYC employees who are under 18 years of age)
- Completing the CYC Child Safety online course

WORK EXPERIENCE AND WORK PLACEMENT STUDENTS

CYC requires all work experience and work placement students who are over 18 to obtain a Working with Children Check.

REPORTING ABUSE

Any employee or volunteer who forms a reasonable belief that abusive activity has or may take place must report this by following the P32 Child Safety Reporting Procedures.

In situations where the supervisor is the alleged perpetrator, or if the person with the allegation does not believe the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the next highest level of authority.



Site Managers and Camp Directors must report allegations of abusive behaviour or misconduct to the appropriate external regulatory body such as Victoria Police or Child Protection Services in accordance with the P32 Child Safety Reporting Procedures.

The above does not eliminate the employee/volunteer's ability to contact Child Protection Services or the police at their own discretion.

INVESTIGATING REPORTS OF ABUSE

If the authorities (Child Protection Services, Police or Commission for Children & Young People) conduct an investigation, all staff/volunteers must fully co-operate with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the Site Manager will consult with the Child Safety Officer and authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate.

The Site Manager will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, there may be times when staff members need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGED ABUSE BY A CYC STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER

If it is alleged that an employee or volunteer may have committed an offence or have breached CYC's Policies, Procedures or P32a Child Safety Code of Conduct, the person concerned will be stood down while an investigation is conducted.

Allegations of child abuse by a CYC staff member or volunteer require mandatory reporting to the Commission for Children & Young People by the CEO.

If the investigation concludes that an offence has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any other external body as required.

PRIVACY

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. CYC will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

REVIEWING THIS POLICY

Every two years, and following a reportable incident, a review will be conducted to assess whether CYC's child safety policies and procedures require modification to better protect the children under CYC's care.

RELATED LEGISLATION

[Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005](#)

[Victorian Child Safe Standards](#)

RELATED DOCUMENTS

P32 Child Safety Reporting Procedure

P32a Child Safety Code of Conduct

F32 Child Abuse Report Form

CP8 CYC Privacy Policy



P39 Reference Checking Procedure

P52 WWC Procedure

Authorised by: Malcolm Reeve (CEO, Christian Youth Camps)
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Reviewed and Updated: March 2018
Reviewed and Updated: September 2019
Reviewed and Updated: February 2022
Reviewed and Updated: March 2023 (definitions updated to match Child Safe Standards)
Next Review Date: March 2025

A copy of this policy is available to employees and volunteers in Lucidity and at all Christian Youth Camps offices.